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SURVEY OF AGRICULTURAL SOCIALIZATION MOVEMENT
IN CERTAIN AREAS OF CHINA

Comment and Summary: This report surveys the development, progress, shortcomings, and future plans of certain mutual aid teams and agricultural production cooperatives in China, as reported in a number of articles published in the Chung-kuo Nung-pao (China Agriculture), in October 1952. This socialization of agriculture is intended to lead the rural population of China from an individualistic capitalist economy to a collectivized socialist economy.

The articles were prepared by the responsible committees of the Chinese Communist Party for the areas concerned and thus represent official appraisals of the situation under analysis and official planning for the future.

This report gives information on Heilungkiang Province; Lin-an Special Administrative District, in Chekiang; Wen-teng Special Administrative District, in Shantung; Wu-hsiang Hsien, in Shansi; and Wu-chin Hsien, in Kiangsu.

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A. Heilungkiang Province

At the end of 1951, in Heilungkiang 72.5 percent of the rural families were enrolled in mutual aid teams. During 1952, the percentage rose to 88. At the same time, the number of mutual aid teams dropped from 150,000 to 137,000. This drop indicates enlargement and strengthening of the individual teams and correction of the former tendency of the peasants to organize without sufficient previous education.

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B. Lin-an Special Administrative District

The information given below for the development of rural production organization in the Lin-an Special Administrative District is from a report of a District Conference of mutual aid team delegates held by the Lin-an CCP (Chinese Communist Party) 27 July to 2 August 1952.

There was an increase of 59 percent in the number of farmers enrolled in the production organizations as compared with 1951. By May 1952, there were 14,999 mutual aid teams in the District. Of these, 3,775 were of the year-round type. There were 12 agricultural production cooperatives. Fifty percent of all households and 46.5 percent of all farmers were enrolled in these organizations. The patriotic production emulation drive has eliminated the formalism that formerly persisted in many of the teams.

C. Wen-teng Special Administrative District

The Wen-teng Hsien mutual aid movement has a 10-year history. [Parts of Shantung were under the control of the Chinese Communist Fourth Route Army from very early in the Sino-Japanese war.] Rentals and interest rates were reduced and organization of the farmers for cooperative labor began in 1942. During the war, the deviation of authoritarianism had an adverse effect upon the development of the mutual aid program. After the war, the pendulum swung to the other extreme and there was a widespread rejection of the leadership of the war-time authoritarian cadres who were not really acquainted with production activities. There then developed an individualized unintegrated type of mutual aid movement which persisted in varying degrees until 1952.

Early in 1952, the Wen-teng party committee, in response to directives from higher levels, instituted a new indoctrination campaign for members and cadres. Party leadership in mutual aid teams was strengthened and mutual aid team delegate conferences were held for training; this resulted in the training of a skeleton force of 130,000 cadres. Strong organization propaganda was carried out among all the villages. A high percentage of village cadres, as high as 92 percent in some areas, joined the mutual aid teams. The principles of voluntary membership, steady, even progress, and democratic control were applied. In a short time, 80 percent of the peasants were organized, doubling the 1951 membership. Under this new program, spring work proceeded with amazing speed. Also during the spring, 23,000 wells were dug, 4,100 dikes were repaired, and over 3,800 small reservoirs were completed.

The more than 10,000 military aid teams now in the area enthusiastically joined in the patriotic production emulation drive. During the first quarter of 1952, the supply and marketing cooperatives sold the farmers 60,400,000 catties of various types of fertilizers as compared with 70 million catties for the whole of 1951.

D. Wu-hsiang Hsien

There were widespread Communist party organizations in Wu-hsiang Hsien as early as 1933. The people thus early developed a high degree of political consciousness and coordination with the party. Cooperative production organization began as early as 1942 - 1943. At present, 92 percent of the rural population are organized.

E. Wu-chin Hsien

The information for this report on rural organization in Wu-chin Hsien comes from a report by hsien party officials of a conference of mutual aid team leaders held the latter part of July 1952.

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In the past, the mutual aid movement in the area has been beset by a number of weaknesses such as:

1. Self-satisfaction which resulted in stagnation.
2. A lack of political instruction resulting in extremism, either leftist or rightist. There has been a tendency to eliminate intermediate steps in a quick drive toward socialism, and, on the other hand, a tendency to lean toward capitalism and to look forward to becoming wealthy farmers or merchants.
3. Mutual aid team leaders from the middle-peasant class promoted their own ideas and neglected the interests of the poor farmers.
4. There has been too much emphasis on production and too little on political indoctrination.
5. Many cadres have manifested marked unwillingness to assume responsibility and have tried to avoid attending meetings on the grounds that they interfered with production.
6. The principle of voluntary membership has been disregarded. Those who failed to join were regarded as not entitled to loans or were even stigmatized as counterrevolutionaries. Again, it was said the voluntary principle applied only to joining, not to leaving the mutual aid team.
7. Seasonal mutual aid teams were looked down upon and year round mutual aid teams were glorified. This revealed a failure to grasp the principle of orderly progress from simple to complex.
8. A failure to implement the principle of "to each according to his effort" in determining pay scales for labor.

II. PRESENT CONDITIONS

A. Heilungkiang Province

1. Strength

During 1952, the mutual aid team movement has been strengthened by the example of agricultural production cooperatives and collective villages. Mutual aid teams are looking forward to becoming agricultural production cooperatives and are taking such preparatory steps as making application to hsien authorities for authorization to reorganize, acquiring common property, and shifting from oxen to horses in order to use modern machinery.

The percentage of the more permanent types of mutual aid teams is continually increasing.

The Heilungkiang mutual aid teams quickly progressed from labor exchanging organizations to economic organizations able to make advantageous arrangements with supply and marketing cooperatives for relief grain when needed and for other economic aid for their members. Statistics prepared by the Provincial Supply and Marketing Cooperative reveal that 1,140 mutual aid teams and agricultural production cooperatives in Heilungkiang have made contracts with 778 supply and marketing cooperatives involving 4.2 billion yuan worth of business.

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By educational programs Heilungkiang mutual aid teams promote better agricultural techniques, bring women into field production activities, and promote efficient division of labor. The more progressive organizations have an agricultural work leader, a supplementary industry leader, a supply and sales activity leader, a loan funds leader, a women's leader, and a technical research worker.

Most mutual aid teams have eliminated all forms of labor exploitation and are helping the needy by proper adjustments in pay rates as between manpower and animal power.

Participation in the patriotic production emulation movement has strengthened the tendency for mutual aid teams to become permanent.

Having carried on active educational work before the beginning of the agricultural busy season in 1952, the cadres have time to engage in active field work with the other mutual aid team members. This has proved to be an important factor in stabilization of the mutual aid team program in Heilungkiang. The experience gained in actual productive work enables the cadres and party members to be much more effective in their conference and training course presentations.

Model cooperative villages that embody the best principles of collective effort are appearing. More attention is being paid to the needs of the more rudimentary types of mutual aid teams and backward villages. This is having important results for over-all production as well as the increase per unit of area.

Cultural activities in the mutual aid teams and agricultural production cooperatives are increasing, especially newspaper reading. Newspaper subscriptions run as high as 75.5 percent of membership in some areas with an attendant elevation of political consciousness and education in collectivism.

2. Weaknesses

No weak points were mentioned in the article.⁷

B. Lin-an Special Administrative District

1. Strength

The T'ian Chin-jung Mutual Aid Team in Hsing-teng Hsien has a labor remuneration plan based on carefully worked out schedules of the labor required for a given task. It even includes such details as the depth of transplanting rice and the remuneration to be given to women attendants in nurseries for the care of children of different ages. For instance, 2½ points per child per day are allowed for care of a babe in arms and two points for other children. This is a system based on both quality and quantity of work. With this wage system in operation, morale has improved. For instance, the total time elapsed and the total number of man-days required for planting a certain field of rice were reduced from 1¼ days elapsed and 60 man-days of labor in 1951 to 9 and 40, respectively, in 1952.

2. Weaknesses

Some mutual aid teams display a lack of appreciation of the principle of voluntary membership and manifest it in ostracism of those withdrawing from mutual aid teams.

Some have poor policies on remuneration for manpower, tools, and animal power.

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Some organizations display strong tendencies toward formalism. They have too much office procedure and paper work. Some labor teams march to work in the fields preceded by flags. Some reveal lack of ability to adopt the size of labor force to the size of the job.

Capitalist tendencies, such as employment of long-term labor, loaning mutual aid team funds at high rates of interest (20 percent in some cases), and revision to the old system of weights and measures occur in some mutual aid teams.

Unequal pay for men and women for the same work occurs in some mutual aid teams.

C. Wen-teng Special Administrative District

1. Strength

In 1952, there was a membership gain of 9 percent over 1951 for a total of 67 percent of farmers organized.

The number of short-term mutual aid teams dropped from 76 percent to only 53.7 percent of the total number of mutual aid teams. Year-round mutual aid teams rose from 24 percent to 46.3 percent of the total.

Political consciousness is high and party leadership is strong.

2. Weaknesses

Capitalistic tendencies. In Mou-p'ing Hsien all 187 party members are employing long-term labor.

Many cadres vociferously promote the organization of mutual aid teams but cannot explain the principles of organization and operation.

Leftism. There are many who want to move almost immediately into the advanced stages of socialism, dispensing with the necessary intermediate steps and eliminating private property in the mutual aid teams.

D. Wu-hsiang Hsien

1. Strength

The 24 key-point agricultural production cooperatives have favorably influenced the whole hsien toward agricultural production cooperative organization; 200 mutual aid teams want to organize agricultural production cooperatives.

Mutual aid teams have been improved, reduced in number, and prepared for advance.

The party cadres are active in publicizing and educating toward agricultural production cooperatives. Each of the present agricultural production cooperatives brings a number of villages under its influence to aid them in preparing for agricultural production cooperative organization.

The leadership is experienced. The cadres of over 20 ch'u have had personal experience in organization and leadership. Local cadres are mentally prepared for organizational advance.

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Definite plans have been made to enroll 40 percent of the farm families of the Hsien in agricultural production cooperatives during 1952 - 1954.

2. Weaknesses

No weak points were mentioned in the article.⁷

E. Wu-chin Hsien

The discussion in the cadre conference concerning present conditions among the mutual aid teams in Wu-chin Hsien centered on practical questions such as systems of determining and keeping account of recompense for labor performed by the mutual aid team members, also for their tools and work animals. Seven principal types of procedure were found to be in use in various mutual aid teams to determine members' income and handle the necessary accounting.

1. Wage credits computed by acreage, taking into account the distance walked to work and the quality of the crop; includes a decision on the man-days of labor required and credit points allowed for work actually done. This plan is equitable and spurs effort, but is complicated and hard to carry out.

2. Piecework. In this plan, output standards are set up by which to judge performance. This plan is reasonable and spurs activity, but is complicated and bothersome to carry out.

3. A uniform wage rate with individual accounting. This plan is simple and easy to carry out but may tend to formalism.

4. Individual wage rate. Credit points based on individual efficiency with individual accounting. This plan is reasonable and encourages effort, but involves complicated bookkeeping.

5. Flat wage rate, mass accounting with settlement at end of season according to the amount of land involved and labor contributed. This is the most easily accepted plan in use in Wu-chin Hsien at present. However, the plan does not develop activists.

6. Plan of credit-point recording at given times. This plan, too, fails to develop activists.

7. Balancing one man's work against another or simple exchange of labor. This is an outmoded method of the early mutual aid experiments.

The first four of these labor recompense and accounting plans are the most suitable, but they must be adapted to the developmental stage of the mutual aid teams and made to fit actual conditions. Improvement of quality is of the greatest importance and haphazard methods of accounting should be opposed. Emphasis on raising the level of the mutual aid teams too rapidly is to be avoided. Justice within the mutual aid teams is to be maintained.

Two main plans for acquiring the services of work animals are in use in Wu-chin Hsien mutual aid teams.

1. Some mutual aid teams buy animals either by borrowing money or by the members subscribing shares to raise funds. Either a feeder is appointed or the animals are boarded around among the members. The second method is bad since no one assumes real responsibility.

2. Other mutual aid teams use privately owned animals and decide on rates of remuneration. Some remunerate by evaluating animal power against manpower. The main problem is to strike a reasonable wage rate for animal power.

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There are four main plans employed in the use of tools and implements.

1. Private ownership, public use with a special custodian. About 10 percent of the mutual aid teams in the hsien are following a plan of assessing the members to raise money to buy the tools for public ownership. The assessment is prorated according to the amount of land each member owns.
2. Private ownership, public use with the mutual aid team paying for upkeep and losses. About 5 percent of mutual aid teams are following this plan.
3. Private ownership, public use and repairs at public expense with remuneration for use according to an accepted point system. About 5 percent of the mutual aid teams are using this plan.

All of the above three plans are reasonable.

4. Public ownership, public use. About 80 percent of the mutual aid teams are following this plan. It has the disadvantage of discouraging the desire for private ownership.

III. FUTURE NEEDS

A. Heilungkiang Province

For the 1953 mutual aid promotion program in Heilungkiang the following suggestions are offered.

1. Strengthen the two collective village organizations now in existence, but add no more in 1953.
2. Distribute 1,000 sets of new-type horse-drawn implements. With the exception of eight to ten sets of implements to be distributed in the various hsiens for experimental purposes, the rest should be distributed in the eight key-point hsiens: Hai-lun, Pai-ch'ian, Na-ho, Sui-hua, K'o-shan, Chao-tung, Chao-chou, and Chao-yuan.

B. Lin-an Special Administrative District

The Lin-an Special Administrative District Conference decided on the following recommendations for the future.

1. Maintain the principle of voluntary enrollment, withdrawal, or shift in mutual aid teams. However, efforts should be made by means of political indoctrination to keep such changes to a minimum.
2. Use of labor. Estimate work units on the basis of an individual's strength, skill, and effectiveness, men and women alike.
3. In the use of farm implements, just remuneration and care should be given for private implements and tools used publicly.
4. Use of Work Animals
 - a. Contract work to animal owners.
 - b. Set daily wage rate for animals.
 - c. Mutual aid teams purchase animals from owners and use and care for them as public property.

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5. Democratic Control

a. Mutual aid teams should have good chairmen who will call meetings. However, decisions should be made by vote of the working members. The mutual aid teams also need a timekeeper, treasurer, newsreader, and auditor.

b. There should be daily meetings, daily accounting, and semimonthly settlements.

c. Newspaper reading should be carried on every day or every other day.

d. Hold regular criticism, self-criticism, and review meetings.

e. Maintain an inspection system.

f. Have a concise and easily carried out mutual aid team contract and statement of labor discipline.

C. Wen-teng Special Administrative District

The Wen-teng Special Administrative District program included the following plans:

1. Stronger propaganda for organization of mutual aid teams. Cadres should master thoroughly the principles of voluntary participation to be able to allay the fears of the peasants by clear explanations of the benefits of mutual aid teams.

2. Members of mutual aid teams should be instructed until they are thoroughly grounded in all phases of organization. Democratic discussion should make it possible for them to solve their problems with mutual understanding.

3. Better planning for production and improved efficiency in carrying it out must be realized.

4. Mutual aid teams must come to grips with and solve the problem of surplus manpower, otherwise the whole mutual aid program may collapse.

5. Technical skills must be steadily improved.

6. Continued study must be given to the development of supplementary industries suited to the areas where they are carried on.

7. Peasants must be provided with a correct program for the investment of surplus capital in production through purchase of modern farm equipment, and increase in the amount of public property owned by mutual aid organizations.

8. Continued education must be provided to promote better popular understanding of the fact that the mutual aid cooperative movement is a necessary policy for the party to follow in leading the peasant masses from the small production of an individual economy toward the large-scaled mechanized production of a collective economy.

9. Mutual aid teams must continually strengthen the leadership capacity and participation of the workers in the decisions of the mutual aid teams.

10. Both rightist and leftist deviationism must be eliminated.

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D. Wu-hsiang Hsien

The 3-year goal for the organization of agricultural production cooperatives in Wu-hsiang Hsien calls for:

1. Positive and rapid, but stable, expansion of the agricultural production cooperative movement into each administrative village area. All new agricultural production cooperatives should be based on successful mutual aid teams. The expansion of the production cooperatives should include not only agricultural areas, but also grazing and forestry areas. In the latter areas, grazing, forestry, and handicraft production cooperatives should be promoted.

2. Detailed plans in four stages for a total of 297 agricultural production cooperatives:

a. Organize 46 agricultural production cooperatives after harvest in 1952, 99 in the spring of 1953, 51 after wheat harvest in 1953, 81 in the spring of 1954 (the present 24 to be combined to make 20).

b. A total of 45 grazing and forestry agricultural production cooperatives. Because of lack of experience with these, experimentation with only 4 key-point organizations is to be undertaken in 1952. Fifteen may be organized in 1953 and 26 in 1954.

c. A total of 83 handicraft production cooperatives should be the goal. These will include small factories, pottery, paper, coal, and iron activities. All these will be local small-scale operations. Expansion of handicraft production cooperatives should keep step with the expansion of agricultural production cooperatives. They may be auxiliary to agricultural production cooperatives or independent. Auxiliary types may eventually become independent. Of these 5 may be organized in 1952; 20 in 1953; and 58 in 1954, 25 in the spring and 33 in the fall. These 83 handicraft production cooperatives, properly conducted, will solve labor problems for 1,500 to 2,000 workers.

d. This plan envisages the enrollment of over 40 percent of rural families in various types of production cooperatives. The area involved has a total of 37,000 families located on 600,000 mou. The annual increase breakdown is:

1952 -- 3,000 families on 45,000 mou

1953 - 1954 -- 12,000 families on 180,000 mou

This represents 41 percent of the families and 38 percent of the land in the expansion area.

3. Problems to Consider in Implementing This Program

a. Organize and educate local party cadres in the principles of organization and collectivism. Especially work with party members who are moving toward a wealthy peasant economy in order to slow down this tendency. They cannot lead the masses while moving in that direction.

b. Strengthen the leadership of the mutual aid teams and discourage any tendency to by-pass mutual aid teams for agricultural production cooperatives. Lead the people positively, but in orderly sequence, into agricultural production cooperatives.

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c. Give strong leadership to the rural loan trust and savings movement. This is important to the 3-year plan envisioned above.

d. Strengthen technical improvement in present agricultural production cooperatives. Encourage higher production records.

e. Since this movement to expand agricultural production cooperatives in Wu-hsiang Hsien is new, nothing should be taken for granted in regard to leadership capabilities. During late 1952, demand that every cadre prepare himself to promote and control agricultural production cooperatives. Give scheduled training to mutual aid teams leaders anticipating agricultural production cooperatives as well as all cadres, party members, and activists.

E. Wu-chin Hsien

The Wu-chin Hsien mutual aid team leaders' conference proposed the following policies for the future:

1. A practical system of compensation is necessary for cadres losing work time to attend meetings. Too little compensation for meeting time will lead to their neglect, too much will lead to overemphasis on meetings. The compensation should be decided on in conference of the members by democratic procedures. Probably half the regular rate of remuneration for field work would be fair. When a cadre is called upon to attend an outside meeting to discuss affairs relating to his own mutual aid team a maximum of 5 days credit may be allowed. In mutual aid teams with a membership of five families or less, no credit should be allowed for attendance on such meetings. In the busy season a casual laborer may be employed to substitute for the absent cadre.

2. Cadres should get practical experience by working in mutual aid teams. At the end of each season hold mutual aid team delegates' meetings to exchange experiences. Hold periodic discussion meetings for all farmers.

3. Mutual aid team leaders should recognize the dignity of their service to the nation and not spare themselves in making their work a success. They must be examples in democracy, cultural advance, in solicitude for the members, in planning, in political consciousness and in education of members.

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